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was working on the roof, the other thatched the wall facing the forest, and the house was subsequently occupied while work was still proceeding on that wall. The wall toward the village was temporarily hung with cloth drapes for privacy, although for purposes of protection from enemies the opposite side was thatched first. 342

Additional thatch was placed on the house at the beginning of the rainy season. At that time light poles were bound to the frame for greater support. The chief's house began to sag from the weight of the thatch, and braces had to be put under the ridge pole. Two posts, as heavy as the center posts, were crossed just below the ridge pole and bound together. A few men got behind each post and pushed so that the poles would assume a more nearly vertical position and give firmer support to the ridge poles. When this had been accomplished, the bases of the posts were set in holes. 342 335

Quain had the opportunity to observe two houses being constructed: his own and a fifth dwelling being built by two Trumaí men. His own small house took one week to build. The work started off with a great burst of effort, and in four hours all the wall posts, center posts and the ridge pole were in place. However, every day thereafter progress became increasingly slower. 123 342 461

House styles and construction were not rigidly conventionalized. The Trumaí helped build a house for the missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Young, and they thought that Quain, being a *kuruhiba* (white man), would like one such as the Youngs had designed for themselves. When they were half finished with the frame, Quain realized what was happening, and asked for a haystack house like theirs. The revision was made easily and the result was a hybrid. This, added to the fact that two of the houses in the village were much larger than the other two, indicated a certain flexibility and willingness to imitate. The Kamayurá classified the different posts and poles that went into house building, but the Trumaí had only very broad terms for the corresponding parts. 123 341 [197] [192] [335]

The heavy work of raising the ridge pole, stepping in braces, and carrying and inserting center posts was done cooperatively. These joint labors, although brief and infrequent, made for a festive occasion and gave rise to laughter and gaiety, an unusual thing among the men. With the exception of operations requiring the combined efforts of more men, the house was built by the males who were to occupy it. Women took no part in the building. Yanahi and Mayuva, who were building a new house, shared the work unequally, Yanahi doing the larger part. They did not always work at the same time, and, when they did, they worked on separate sections of the house. 335 342 476 [462]

Quain's house was built cooperatively because he was an outsider, and it was the obligation of the whole community to accommodate him. 123 342 476 574

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531 302 Black zig-zags on a grayish background were painted on the body of one of the singers. Many designs were undoubtedly conventionalized, but seemingly not according to rigid standards.

All of these designs were observed on men. The women painted themselves much less often, and their patterns were far simpler. Blackened foreheads and black streacks on the thighs were most common. The latter looked as if the women had merely wiped their hands on their thighs after having painted their husbands.

Children also had their bodies painted. Some of the boys blackened their faces or had black dots put on their chests. One little girl had black angles painted on her cheek by her mother. Children's and women's body designs were simple and required little paint. The men reserved most of the paint for themselves.

A husband's painting was often done by his wife, but men frequently adorned themselves or another man, particularly a younger close relative. There may also have been specialized knowledge of certain designs. Only one man was said to be able to make the zig-zag snake pattern, and he painted it on the bodies of others.

Work Patterns

461 512 Accompanying the low degree of specialization and cooperation in production was a lack of rhythm in the work habits of the Trumaí. The day started at about three or four o'clock in the morning. At this time many persons got out of their hammocks to fan their fires and huddle around them, for these were the chilliest hours. The men might get together at this time and talk while the women prepared food. Not much work was done then. At most, a man might add some thatch to his house. By sunrise everyone was awake, and the women went in a [515] body to a nearby arm of the lagoon to bathe and draw containers of water. The men usually went to bathe a little later in pairs or alone. After bathing, everyone ate, and the work day really began.

Those who intended to garden went out early and labored until ten or eleven o'clock, that is, while it was cool and insects were less troublesome. As a rule, they ate again upon returning and then stayed in the [264] village the rest of the day, working at various crafts as the spirit moved them. Actually a good deal of time was spent loafing and sleeping.

Those who planned to fish started out in the morning, but usually after the gardeners had departed. Unless a two or three day trip was planned, they commonly returned by four o'clock, and always before dark. Occasionally a group of men and women went to the lagoon to [258] spend a day or two making salt.

One of the striking features of Trumaí economic activity was the number of different tasks done by various people on the same day.

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Agendas were ordinarily based on the immediate needs of the household or the desire for some variety in their diet. Food, however, was shared widely, and this probably robbed most work of any sense of urgency. Apparently, each man's plans for the day were determined in part by the season, in part by the household needs, and in part by what he felt like doing.

Some men stayed in the village all day, sleeping and working intermittently at small tasks. The women spent more time in the village than the men. Their work was done in the house or, if outside, in the shade of the house. Since male work was done largely in the morning, most of the men had ample time in the afternoon for trade, wrestling, and other diversions. The trade game was an especially popular indoor activity on rainy days.

Much less work was probably done during the rainy season, for planting would be finished, the *piquí* would be harvested, and the heavy rains would confine people to the village. However, there was much less seasonal variation for the women, as they had to continue to make *beijú*, weave, cook, and care for their households — the ordinary female chores, whatever the month.

Trumaí economic life was loosely organized. Few types of labor transcended the nuclear family, which was the basic unit of economic cooperation and interdependence. The inventory of material culture was sparse, and workmanship was not highly developed. What the Trumaí did not make, they could obtain by trade. From the standpoint of technology, the Trumaí were more backward than other tribes in the upper Xingú area, perhaps a reflection of their more recent settlement in the region.

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a certain point at least, the take increases geometrically with the number of persons participating.

In gardening, also, which was not practiced collectively, their small number decreased Trumaí security. It was common for nearly all the village men to plant their gardens in clearings adjacent to those of their neighbors. Obviously, if one part of such a single, extended clearing was improperly fired, or if the crops were destroyed by armadillos or wild pigs, the whole village might be without food. Crop failure for a variety of causes is common in the tropical forests, but most aboriginal communities in South America have several separated garden clearings, each owned by an individual or extended family. If one garden fails, the family can, in a period of emergency, reap from others. Oberg relates that the Trumaí once had to turn for food to the Kamayura,[4] perhaps because of the failure of the village clearing.

It is, of course, possible that in the past the Trumaí organized their gardens along the more rational lines of the Kamayurá;[5] and it is also possible that they never made a proper ecological adaptation subsequent to their arrival in the upper Xingú region. But lacking information on their economy prior to their decimation, we cannot make any firm statement on these points. However, it is certain that, despite their small numbers, the individual Trumaí could have cleared and planted much more land. The average size of the gardens observed by Quain was one-half acre, and this area had to feed up to four people. Many men also had old gardens which were planted only to manioc. According to Quain's calculations, the total acreage of Trumaí gardens was only a little over thirteen. Since yields from forest soils are not high, it is evident that this very small area must have barely met the needs of a population of 43 persons. Manifestly, the Trumaí did not work hard enough; and it seems evident that their lack of application did more to impoverish them than any other single factor.

If the other upper Xingú tribes are used as criteria to establish what Trumaí society was like before its decline, some very serious dysfunctions within Trumaí social structure soon become apparent. To be sure, such a comparison is an arbitrary procedure; and it is only invoked here for its heuristic value. Since village and house patrilocality is the usual mode of residence among the Trumaí, a household similar to that of the Kamayurá, and with like functions, might be expected and might indeed have existed in the past. However, the Trumaí death rate in 1938 was so high that these units disintegrated before they had gone beyond the embryonic stage. House membership was shifting, the number of persons involved small, and leadership nebulous. And since kinship was the principal mechanism for structuring interpersonal relationships in Trumaí society, this lack of a stable, kin-structured unit probably did

[4] Oberg 1953, p. 42. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 45.